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Suncor slashes workforce

Oilsands giant cutting 1,000 jobs, \$1 billion from its capital budget as crude prices plummet

PAGE 16

YUP, WE'LL ALL MISS KNOPE

AS PARKS AND RECREATION'S LAST SEASON BEGINS, METRO LOOKS BACK AT ALL THE THINGS WE LOVE ABOUT PAWNEE

PAGE 19



Sunday, January 18

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LAST CURTAIN FOR THE ROXY

The historic Roxy theatre was reduced to ash after a fire broke out in the building early Tuesday morning. Fire crews were dousing hot spots well into the day on Tuesday and investigators had just begun their work, with no indications on the cause of the blaze. Story, page 4.

RYAN TUMILTY/METRO

Alberta sales tax on table

Budget crisis. Premier 'prepared to be educated' on tax he opposes, as province faces \$6-billion hole



RYAN TUMILTY
ryan.tumilty@metronews.ca

Premier Jim Prentice's hard-line stance against a provincial sales tax softened Tuesday, as Alberta's budget crisis appears to have left him willing to be convinced.

Speaking at the Edmonton Economic Development Impact luncheon, Prentice said he still personally opposes it, but wants to hear from Albertans.

"I don't think Albertans generally advocate a sales tax, but I'm prepared to be educated and to hear from people," he said. "It's time for people to speak up about this."

Even if oil prices rise to \$62 a barrel next year, Prentice said the province would

have a \$6-billion hole in the budget.

"This is the most significant public financial circumstance that we have seen in a generation," he said.

He said the province would be pushing real restraint on public spending and would contemplate a deficit, but taxes also had to be on the table to keep the province on the right fiscal footing.

"Unless we deal with this and make some of the changes we need to make, we're talking about eroding Alberta's triple-A credit rating," he said.

Prentice said they will be asking Albertans about the budget and the province's fiscal picture and he didn't rule out an election to get that advice.

"An election is a possibility, but firstly we have to develop a fiscal plan. We have to consult with Albertans about what they think is best and then at the end of the day we will assess where we are."

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with energy levels, blood pressure, cholesterol, joint discomfort, and assisted in strengthening the immune system.

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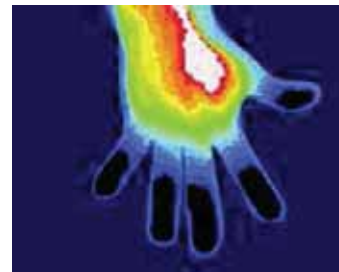
Based on the research of Dr. Nathan S. Bryan, PhD, who lectures to doctors around the world about Nitric Oxide, Neogenis® Labs has created a revolutionary lozenge, called Neo 40 daily, that makes it easy to restore N-O levels. This "fast-dissolve" lozenge restores your N-O to youthful levels by dissolving within 90 seconds and begins to work immediately, which leads to better circulation, for many in as little as 20 minutes.

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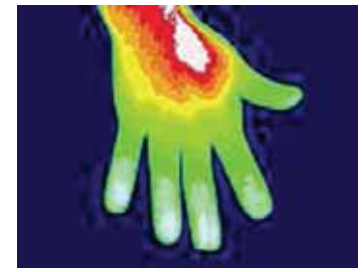
Better circulation helps increase stamina, maximizes metabolism, helps manage stress and maintains healthy sexual function. Healthy N-O levels also promote better blood pressure and cholesterol as a result of improved circulation to all major organs.

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Actual Thermographic Image of Hand shows circulation in hands before and after taking Neo 40 daily. On the Left, the fingertips are almost black showing little blood flow. On the Right, lighter colored fingers show increased blood flow after only 20 minutes.

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Forecast

Prentice pans talk of Alberta recession

Premier Jim Prentice is scoffing at a suggestion by the Conference Board of Canada that Alberta is likely to face a recession as crude prices continue to plunge.

"I don't agree with it," he said Tuesday of the Ottawa-based economic think-tank's assessment.

"I didn't find their analysis to be particularly cogent, to be frank, and the opinion that they put forward is an outlier amongst all of the other opinions that have been put forward by every one of Canada's chartered banks and by other respected economic forecasters."

The Conference Board notes that Alberta's latest employment and new housing-start numbers are holding steady, but if oil prices stay low the province will slip into recession.

Chief economist Glen Hodgson said even if oil prices rebound to \$65 US a barrel, investment, profits and consumer spending will be down.

Oil prices settled below \$46 a barrel on Tuesday, less than half of where they were less than six months ago.

Lower oil revenues are hurting Alberta's coffers, with the province's budget surplus this year turning into a \$500-million deficit.

Todd Hirsch, chief economist at ATB Financial, also disagreed that the Alberta economy is going to shrink this year. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**



Charles Laing and Brendan Leason are currently planning their route for the Mongol Charity Rally, a 40-day run that starts in London and ends in Mongolia.
LEAH HOLOIDAY/METRO

Pair plans epic journey from London to Mongolia

Rally. U of A students hope to raise money for CoolEarth charity, Alzheimer's research



LEAH HOLOIDAY
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Two University of Alberta students are counting on their childhood friendship and marginal knowledge of car mechanics to get them through a 10,000-mile charity car rally, spanning across the U.K., Europe and Asia.

Friends since middle

DIY travel

The Mongol Charity Rally has no set route, so each team has to design their own travel itinerary, which could include travelling through Turkey, Iran and Uzbekistan.

school, Charles Laing and Brendan Leason said they decided to compete in the legendary Mongol Charity Rally after tossing the idea around casually.

"It just kind of happened one day and we registered for it," shrugged Laing, a second-year computer sci-

ences major.

The rally starts in London and ends in Mongolia, covering 10,000 miles of terrain between Europe and Asia. It's expected to take 40 days, so both Laing and Leason hope to be back for the start of school in September.

While participants in the rally fundraise for the event's charity CoolEarth, the pair is also hoping to raise money for the Alzheimer Society of Alberta and Northwest Territories before they depart.

Laing and Leason said they're also looking to entice a few city sponsors interested in buying ad space

on their car. They'll purchase the vehicle in London for no more than 500 British pounds, as stipulated by the contest rules.

Laing said vehicle breakdowns are just one issue the team could face on their journey across two continents.

"I mean there's nothing that can really prepare you for this. You're in the middle of nowhere and you don't have any access to tools. You pretty much have a screwdriver and a wrench," he said.

"We'll probably try to bring more than just a screwdriver and a wrench," Leason added.

1 NEWS

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GX 460

Roxy fire a loss to city's entire theatre community

Blaze. "A lot of love and sweat went into that building" official says

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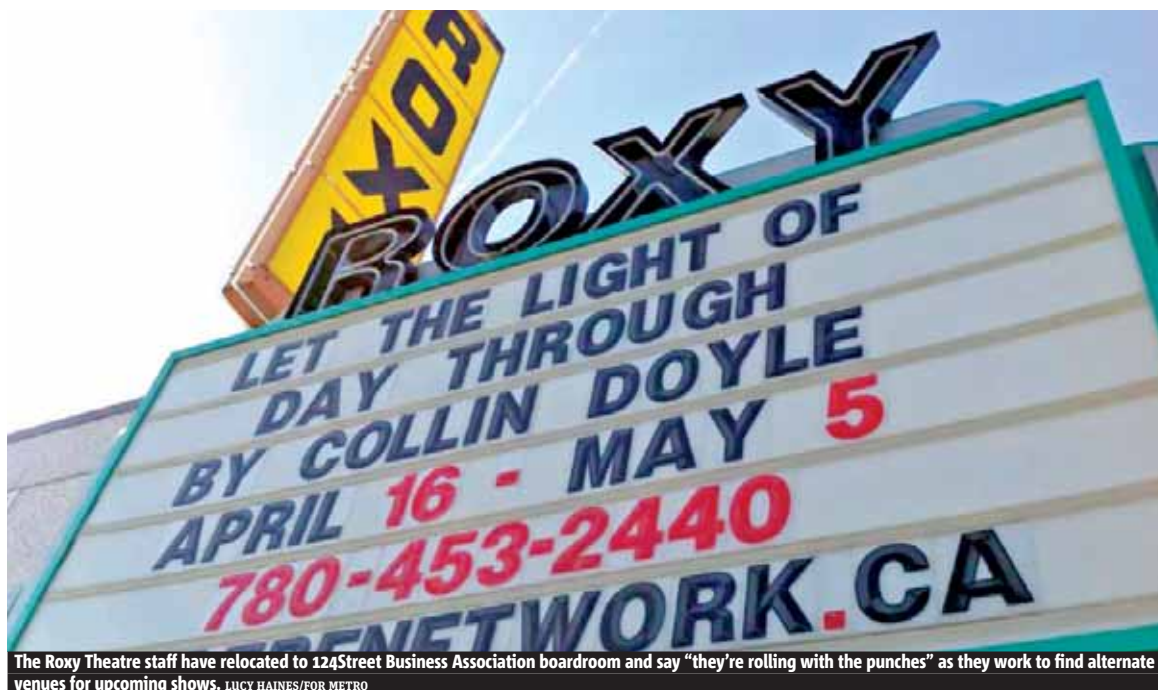
Edmonton's theatre community is expressing shock and offering support to Theatre Network after its home space at the historic Roxy Theatre was lost to a fire Tuesday morning.

Aaron Talbot, communications and marketing coordinator at Theatre Alberta, said the umbrella organization is "devastated for Theatre Network. And everybody has worked at Nextfest — performers, directors, technicians.

"We're very sad for the loss of the space. It's shocking. It was a surreal morning," he said.

Temporarily operating from the boardroom at the 124 St. Business Association, Theatre Network was to meet Tuesday night to decide the next step, according to marketing director Taylor Chadwick, including if and where the show *Cheerleader!* will be staged.

Free Will Players has said that proceeds from its Saturday night fundraiser will be shared with Theatre Network.



The Roxy Theatre staff have relocated to 124Street Business Association boardroom and say "they're rolling with the punches" as they work to find alternate venues for upcoming shows. LUCY HAINES/FOR METRO

"We have a responsibility to the community and ourselves to continue. We're theatre people — we're rolling with the punches," said Chadwick.

Martin Galba, performer and artistic director of Two One Way Tickets to Broadway Productions, housed his small company across from the

Roxy Theatre in 2013. "Having a home space provides stability — history, memories and careers were built in that space. But theatre is about community. We all have to pitch in to help rebuild what was lost," he said.

Walterdale Theatre will be one of the few remaining decades-old theatres once

the Varscona shuts down for a planned rebuild. The company's artistic director Adam Kuss said Walterdale's heart goes out to the Theatre Network family. "An institution in our city has been lost — it's beyond words."

Councillor Ben Henderson, who ran Theatre Network at the Roxy for five years in the

early '90s and was part of a theatre renovation, said "a lot of love and sweat went into that building. With it and the Varscona out of operation, it'll be a struggle for the arts community," he said.

The Free Will Players Blow the Roof Off fundraiser goes Saturday night at C103 (Catalyst) at 7 p.m.

Landmark

124Street business people shocked by Roxy blaze

Members of Edmonton's 124 Street business community pledged to rally behind the Roxy Theatre, just hours after the historic building was reduced to a pile of ash.

Known as a cultural hub in Edmonton, executive director of 124 Street Business Association Jeff McLaren said it took nearly three decades for the area to become what it is today and the Roxy played a big role.

"To me, it's the cultural soul of the street. It's been around since the '30s and to me, it's the one landmark, the pillar, for the community that's been here," he said, noting the theatre brought arts and culture to the street.

"They were the forefront of the redevelopment of 124 Street," he said.

While the theatre had been a mainstay in the area since the early 1930s, McLaren said 124 Street started to see redevelopment in the early 1990s when a Mountain Equipment Co-Op was built.

Since then, the growth has been incremental, he said.

"In the last five years, we've really hit that critical mass." Krista Franke, director 124 Grand Market, said the community is shocked after the fire, calling the Roxy a massive anchor for all the businesses on the street. LEAH HOLOIDAY/METRO

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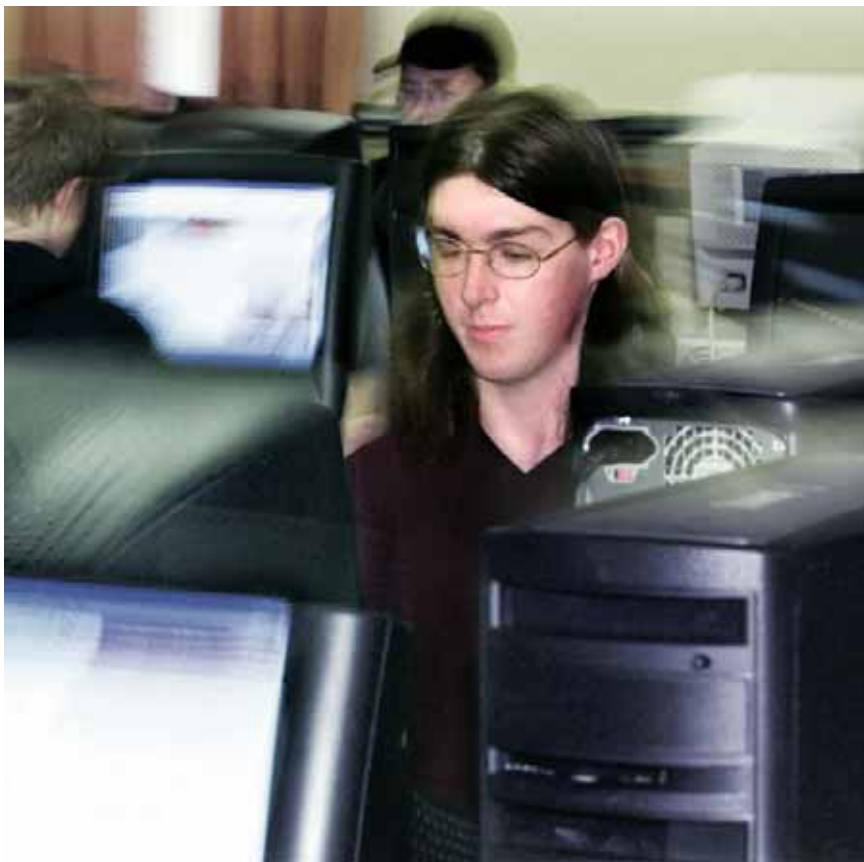
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Some students across the province were forced to ditch the computer Tuesday and complete their English 30 diploma exam with pen and paper after a server crash. METRO FILE

Server crash disrupts 260 diploma exams

'Technical issue.'

Students forced to write the old-fashioned way



LEAH HOLOIDAY
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Edmonton's Catholic school district is calling on the government to toss tainted diploma marks after a server crash forced students to write their English 30 exam with pen and paper Tuesday.

According to Edmonton Catholic School board spokeswoman Lori Nagy, more than 260 students from three different city high schools were affected when QuestA+, a program for diploma exams, crashed.

"This was a difficult morning and very frustrating for students because, as you can imagine, they're already a bit anxious going in to write their diploma exam," said Nagy, adding some students spent

upwards of six hours trying to complete the exam because of the server glitch.

As a result of the confusion, the district has sent a special request to Alberta Education, asking that the diploma marks be tossed if a student's in-class grade was higher for those affected.

A spokesperson from Edmonton's public school district estimated between 1,000 and 1,500 district high school students were affected by the crash, but couldn't confirm if the district planned to make a similar request.

At one Calgary high school, teachers speaking to Metro on condition of anonymity said instructors gave up the system and resorted to more traditional methods.

"They're writing with pencils and on paper ... the old days," said one instructor.

Alberta Education spokesperson Tamara Magnan blamed the server crash on a system overload. Approximately one-third of students writing Tues-

Write on

The diploma schedule is slated to continue Wednesday with a social studies exam. Calgary's public district, the largest user of QuestA+, has been instructed to have students complete the exam with pen and paper until further notice

day's exam were using the program — a 15 per cent increase from last year — which caused the server to crash.

Alberta Teacher Association president Mark Ramsankar called the server crash frustrating and questioned how the government planned on handling student marks.

"To me, that seriously brings into question the validity of the exam results themselves," he said.

Ramsankar said he was also concerned with how results from Tuesday's diploma were going to be compared to results from tests written in June.

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Oil woes. Public servants must share pain: Prentice

Premier Jim Prentice said Alberta's days of being the best paying government in Canada have to come to an end.

Speaking to an Edmonton business community, the premier said Alberta can't continue to pay so much more to its public servants.

"In every level of public employment we have, we're paying vastly more than anyone else in the country and it's not sustainable," he said.

Using education as an example, Prentice said 77 per cent of that ministry's budget is wages and they will have to be examined as Alberta deals with the reality of low oil prices.

"It's not realistic to think we can deal with a \$6- to \$7-billion hole in the government's finances without dealing across the board with all elements," he said.

AUPE President Guy Smith said public servants make more in Alberta, because everyone else does.

"If you look at the aver-

Teachers' wages

In the coming year, teachers will receive a two per cent increase and a one-time lump-sum payment.

- This is the last year of the contract.
- The president of the Alberta Teachers' Association said he is disappointed by Prentice's decision to make teachers a scapegoat.

age private sector salaries they're way higher than the national average," he said.

Mark Ramsankar, president of the Alberta Teachers' Association, said teachers have already helped Alberta's finances.

"Teachers have done their part. We've had three years of wage freezes," Ramsankar said.

"This isn't new management. This is standard fare."

RYAN TUMILTY/METRO

Reading is a top priority for Dovercourt School principal

Literacy. 'Building a child's love of literacy opens up a world of opportunity,' says Dr. Gerry Falk

LUCY HAINES
edmonton@metronews.ca

Nearly every school morning, Edmonton principal Dr. Gerry Falk spends an hour reading to a handful of Grade 2 students who have problems with reading.

Even though a classroom teacher or educational assistant could do it, it's a project the Dovercourt School educator holds on to with gusto.

"It has become the passion of my life — there's nothing more fulfilling than seeing a child break the code, and it sets them up for life-long learning," said Falk, who has worked as a grade school



Dovercourt School principal Dr. Gerry Falk with current and previous reading program students. LUCY HAINES/FOR METRO

teacher, language arts consultant and psychologist in her near 50-year career with Edmonton Public Schools.

Besides spending the

last 10-plus years helping hundreds of students make breakthroughs in reading, Falk ensures every teacher is trained in balanced literacy

By the numbers

120

With the Edmonton Public School's leveled literacy program, targeted Grade 2 students read 120 books to upgrade reading skills.

and that every target student is tracked.

"I wasn't good at reading in Grade 2, but this helped a lot. Now I can become an author, a soccer player or a teacher," said Grade 3 student Ezekiel Kwandhaor-Mensah.

"I'm going to be a world-famous scientist, and they have to know how to read," said Cyril Bernard, now in Grade 2.

"I feel like I've had the most wonderful career, but at the end of the day, building a child's love of literacy opens up a world of opportunity," said Falk. "That's what matters."

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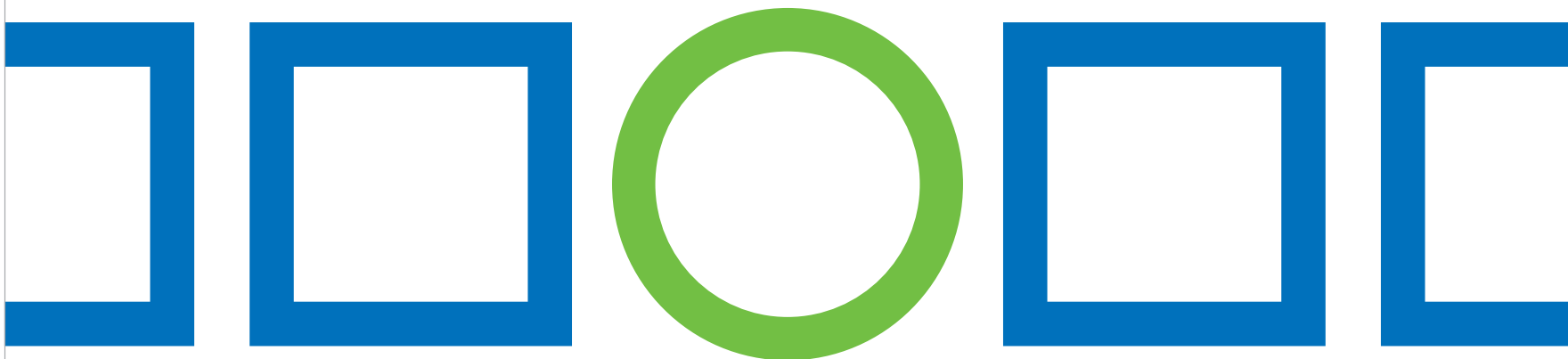
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Shooting. Man charged with attempted murder

Edmonton police have charged a city man with attempted murder and aggravated assault after a woman was taken to hospital with gunshot wounds Monday.

Police arrested Omar Leon Bernel, 20, at approximately 1 p.m. Monday near Millbourne Road and 66 Street after EPS received reports from EMS a 41-year-old woman had been shot.

Both the EPS Tactical Section and Canine Unit were dispatched to the scene, but the suspect had already fled.

Bernel was arrested at a nearby address and is believed

he's known to the victim.

A handgun was found at the same address, but it's unclear if it was the weapon used in the incident, police said in a release.

The victim remains in serious condition in hospital.

Bernel is also facing other weapons charges, including use of a firearm while committing an offence, careless use of a firearm, pointing a firearm, unauthorized possession of a firearm, possession of a firearm knowing possession is unauthorized and carrying a concealed weapon. **METRO**

Alberta flood

Thousands of claims still open

Thousands of Disaster Recovery Program claims related to the 2013 flood remained unresolved at the end of 2014 and more than 100 appeals remained open, according to provincial government documents

published Tuesday by the Alberta Party.

Party leader Greg Clark said the still unresolved claims — which represent about 20 per cent of the 10,594 applications filed in the wake of the southern Alberta floods — represent a broken promise by Premier Jim Prentice.

ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO IN CALGARY

EEDC says Edmonton can survive sliding oil prices



EEDC president Brad Ferguson spoke to more than 1,000 guests at the organization's annual Impact lunch. **RYAN TUMILTY/METRO**

Diversify. President Brad Ferguson pushes importance of promoting tourism, attracting major events, helping startup and small businesses



RYAN TUMILTY
ryan.tumilty@metronews.ca

With plunging oil prices set to bear down on Alberta's economy, the head of Edmonton's economic development agency believes the city will weather the storm.

Speaking at the organization's annual lunch, Edmonton Economic Development Corporation president Brad Ferguson said they saw looming trouble this year and have been working to diversify the city's economy. "We knew this utopian

state wasn't going to last forever, so we made some conscious decisions not to do the easy stuff, but to do the hard stuff," he said.

Ferguson said that includes pushing tourism and attracting major events, as well as helping startups and other small business develop in the city.

He said the city will feel the pain of an oil slide, but it won't be catastrophic.

"Overall, 2015 is not going to be the year that Edmonton gets hit extremely hard," he said.

Mayor Don Iveson agreed with those statements and said slower growth in the coming year could actually help people in the right businesses.

"Now is a good time to be starting new businesses and attracting business that want to be close to the action," he said.

"I see opportunity here right now."

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Arrested terror suspects were on RCMP watch list

The three suspects arrested in a five-day terrorism sweep were among the roughly 90 names on the RCMP's national security watch list, Torstar News Service has confirmed.

Law enforcement sources expect more terrorism-related arrests in the coming weeks, as the world's attention remains focused on last week's attacks in Paris.

Twin brothers Carlos and Ashton Larmond, 24, and Suliman Mohamed, 21, were among the 90 individuals connected to around 63 active terrorism probes by domestic security agencies.

The three men were arrested and charged with a number of terrorism related offences, including participating in the ac-

tivities of a terror group.

One of the brothers, Carlos, was arrested at Pierre Elliott Trudeau airport in Montreal on Friday.

Police expect evidence to show he held an airline ticket to Delhi, India via Frankfurt, Germany, and was intending to travel to Syria to fight for a terrorist cause. His brother Ashton was arrested the same day at a ski hill northeast of Gatineau, Que.

A law enforcement source, speaking on the condition of anonymity, said police believe all three men would have liked to have travelled abroad had they been able to.

Little is known about the case against the three men, and the charges have yet to

be tested in court. What is known is that police believe Mohamed conspired with the two brothers to commit terrorist acts.

Police do not believe the three were radicalized in local mosques, and did not consider them to be immediate threats in the Ottawa area. However CSIS and the RCMP have said suspects sometimes become greater threats at home after their plans to travel abroad are foiled.

Mohamed's lawyer, Doug Baum, said his client was "confused and upset" by the charges, noting that the Crown prosecutors have yet to disclose the evidence against his client.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



The day of the flag draws near

With Feb. 15, the 50th birthday of Canada's beloved Maple Leaf flag, approaching, some are wondering why there has been so little fanfare from the federal government. The party planning appears to pale in comparison to a multimillion-dollar effort to mark Canada's 150th birthday in 2017, and the \$5.2 million that was spent to mark the bicentennial of the War of 1812. The founder of the Canada Flag Holiday Campaign wrote to Prime Minister Stephen Harper this week to express his disappointment in the government's lack of plans to celebrate the flag, the brainchild of former Liberal prime minister Lester B. Pearson, which was adopted in 1965.

DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Major security changes for Hill were rejected: Sources

Shelved over a year ago. Proposals included having a unified security force on Parliament Hill

Advisory group

Torstar has learned that other recommendations of the security advisory group include:

- Pushing the physical screening of public visitors onto the exterior of the parliamentary lawn and away from Centre Block.
- The closure of two public points of access onto the Hill leaving just three main entrances where gate checks could be conducted.
- Mandatory firearms training for all guards.

At least two separate proposals urging major changes to Parliament Hill security were prepared and shelved more than a year before the Oct. 22 attack on Parliament Hill, Torstar News Service has learned.

At the request of former public-safety minister Vic Toews, the RCMP worked on a proposal for a single security force.

The idea of a single force is akin to the U.S. Capitol Police, a federal law-enforcement agency that protects the American Congress. Some advocates believe such a force would offer both cost savings and tighter security. There does not, however, appear to be any appetite internally or externally for that force to be the Mounties.

But for reasons that are not clear, according to multiple sources who spoke to Torstar on condition they not be

named, the proposal did not advance and was rejected in 2013, after Toews was replaced by Steven Blaney.

An advisory group of senior Commons and Senate members that was struck after the Oct. 22 attack is working to come up with recommendations for overhauling security on the Hill — with one eye on exactly that: a single force

that could look more like the one that patrols Capitol Hill in Washington.

The joint working group expects to report by mid-spring on a plan to reinforce physical safety at Parliament Hill.

Sources say that a small group of senators drafted a response to the federal auditor general's report of June 2012, which agreed with the audit and urged the two parliamentary services be unified under a single point of command.

However, it appears the suggestion foundered long ago over disputes about whether the Commons and Senate authorities would have equal say in its management.

The joint working group has already adopted new measures towards unifying the two security services.

Two sources also said the Conservative government was considering a dramatic suggestion to turn Wellington Street in front of the Parliament Buildings into a pedestrian mall and re-route traffic, as was done in 1995 with Washington's Pennsylvania Avenue.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Ottawa

University of Ottawa and its president face suit

The University of Ottawa and its president, Allan Rock, face a class action lawsuit over the suspension of the school's men's hockey team in connection with a sexual assault investigation.

The legal proceeding was launched Tuesday in Ontario's Superior Court of Justice by

lawyer Lawrence Greenspon on behalf of student Andrew Creppin and 21 other members of the varsity hockey team.

Two students who were on the team were charged last summer with sexually assaulting a female student at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay in February. The two are not part of the class action.

Almost a month after the alleged incident in Thunder Bay, Rock suspended the entire hockey team for the

season.

The court filing, which seeks \$6 million in damages, is necessary because the university wrongly tarnished the reputation of every member of the 2013-14 hockey squad, Greenspon said.

Creppin, one of the players, is currently the only one with his name on the lawsuit.

He said he and some other players were at the Thunder Bay hospital with an ailing teammate at the time the sexual assault was alleged to have occurred. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Chimp gets frozen treats

A chimpanzee named Paulinho holds two popsicles at the city zoo, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on Tuesday. Zoo animals were given frozen snacks made from tropical fruits, chunks of meat and frozen yogurt to help ease the intense summer heat. **SILVIA IZQUIERDO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

India

Bad batch of liquor kills at least 28

A bad batch of bootleg liquor killed at least 28 people and sent 160 others to hospitals in the north Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, officials said Tuesday.

Many of the victims had gathered to watch a cricket match Sunday evening in a village about 30 kilometres southwest of the state capital, Lucknow, government official

Anil Garg said. By midday Tuesday, 28 people had died, including 11 in a nearby village, police officer Mukul Goel said.

Police arrested the shop owner who sold the pouches of homemade alcohol for about 30 cents each. A raid of the shop uncovered large containers of chemicals, which were sent to a laboratory for testing, district official R.K. Pandey said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mozambique

Contaminated beer claims three more lives

Three more people have died from drinking contaminated beer, bringing the number of fatalities to 72, as the number hospitalized fell by more than 150, health authorities in Mozambique said Tuesday.

About 35 victims are now hospitalized.

Dozens of people fell ill in Chitima and in the neighbouring Songo district after drinking traditional beer, known as Pombe, at a funeral over the weekend. The beer, brewed from millet or corn flour, is believed to have been poisoned with crocodile bile, according to district health officials. Police investigating the incident said the barrel in which the beer was originally brewed has since disappeared.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Free-climbers near summit of El Capitan

Yosemite National Park. The granite facing of El Capitan's Dawn Wall inside the park is considered the world's most difficult rock climb

Two climbers are almost to the top, in their bid to become the first in the world to use only their hands and feet to scale a sheer granite face in California's Yosemite National Park.

A spokeswoman said Tuesday that 30-year-old Kevin Jorgeson and 36-year-old Tommy Caldwell will likely finish the climb up El Capitan's Dawn Wall on Wednesday evening.

For 17 days, the two have been attempting what many thought impossible. The men are "free-climbing" to the 914-metre summit. This means they don't use climbing aids, other than ropes to prevent deadly falls.

Each trained for more

than five years, and they have battled bloodied fingers and unseasonably warm weather.

Jorgeson fell 11 times over seven days trying to get past one tough section. He took to Facebook on Sunday to publicly celebrate his victory.

"It took everything in my power to stay positive and resolved that I would succeed," he wrote of his continued attempts to get past the grueling section.

The climb began on Dec. 27 and was expected to take two weeks. If the men finish Wednesday, they will have been on the wall closer to three weeks. El Capitan, the largest granite monolith in the world, has about 100 routes to the top. The first climber reached the summit in 1958.

In 1970, Warren Harding and Dean Caldwell — no relation to Tommy Caldwell — climbed Dawn Wall using ropes and countless rivets over 27 days. The duo turned down a rescue attempt by park rangers in a storm.

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Muhammad weeps on Charlie Hebdo's cover

Defiant front. Shows prophet holding a sign with words 'All is forgiven' above him

Charlie Hebdo released a new version of its irreverent and often offensive newspaper Tuesday, defiantly putting a caricature of the Prophet Muhammad on the cover that drew immediate criticism and threats of more violence.

The newspaper also skewered other religions, and ran a double-page spread illustrating Sunday's march in Paris that drew more than a million people to condemn terrorism, claiming that the turnout was larger "than for Mass."

"For the past week, Charlie, an atheist newspaper, has achieved more miracles than



Patrick Pellous, Charlie Hebdo journalist and president of Liberation magazine, holds the new issue of Charlie Hebdo at a press conference at the Liberation offices in Paris on Tuesday. AURELIEN MEUNIER/GETTY IMAGES

all the saints and prophets combined," it said in the lead editorial. "The one we are most proud of is that you have in your hands the newspaper that we always made."

Charlie Hebdo planned an

unprecedented print run of three million copies Wednesday — one week to the day after the assault by two masked gunmen that killed 12 people, including much of its editorial staff and two police officers.

It was the beginning of three days of terror that saw 17 people killed before the three Islamic extremist attackers were gunned down by security forces.

Surviving staff members are now using the offices of the Liberation newspaper, which has lent out space.

The latest cover shows a weeping Muhammad, holding a sign reading "I am Charlie" with the words "All is forgiven" above him. Renald Luzier, the cartoonist who drew the cover image under the pen name "Luz" said it represents "just a little guy who's crying."

Then he added, unapologetically: "Yes, it is Muhammad."

Speaking at a news conference in Paris on Tuesday at which he repeatedly broke down crying, Luzier described weeping after he drew the picture. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Anti-terrorism

PM asks for tougher measures

France's prime minister demanded tougher anti-terrorism measures Tuesday after deadly attacks that some call the French Sept. 11 — and that may already be leading to a crackdown on liberties in exchange for greater security. Police told The Associated Press that the weapons used came from abroad, as authorities in several countries searched for possible accomplices and the sources of financing for last week's attacks.

Germany. Leaders push for tolerance

German political and religious leaders appealed for tolerance Tuesday in the wake of the Paris terror attacks, a message meant to counter both religious extremists and growing anti-Islam protests in Germany.

Chancellor Angela Merkel and President Joachim Gauck were among those who took part in the rally organized by Muslim groups near Berlin's iconic Brandenburg Gate and the French embassy, where wreaths were laid for the 17 people killed by Islamic extremists in Paris last week.

A group calling itself Patriotic Europeans against the Islamization of the West, or PEGIDA, has been staging anti-Islam protests in the eastern city of Dresden for the last three months. Its latest protest Monday drew a record 25,000 supporters, with speakers citing the Paris attacks as proof of the danger posed by Islam.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Alleged Silk Road kingpin on trial in N.Y.C.

Supporters of Ross Ulbricht, the alleged creator and operator of the Silk Road underground market, stand in front of a courthouse in New York City Tuesday on the first day of jury selection for his trial. The San Francisco man is charged with running an online black market where drugs were sold as easily as books and electronics. Prosecutors have been allowed to introduce evidence for about six alleged murder plots. The government maintains that Ulbricht attempted to protect his operation by asking others to kill those who posed a threat to his business. SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES

Punctuality. AirTran goes out in style

AirTran Airways tops all U.S. airlines in the latest rankings for on-time arrivals, knocking off perennial winner Hawaiian Airlines.

The bad news for passengers who love punctuality: You can't fly on AirTran anymore. The low-fare carrier flew its last flight on Dec.

28 and has been folded into Southwest Airlines, which bought AirTran in 2011.

AirTran posted a 90.4 per cent rating, and Hawaiian was second at 89.4 per cent.

Envoy Air finished last with an on-time rating of 69.3 per cent. Envoy operates many American Eagle

regional flights for American Airlines.

The U.S. Department of Transportation said Tuesday that 80.6 per cent of domestic flights on the 14 biggest airlines arrived within 14 minutes of schedule in November.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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Suncor cuts 1,000 jobs as oil plunges

Reducing spending. Oilsands giant says it is taking \$1 billion out of its 2015 budget

Suncor Energy Inc., a huge presence in Alberta's oilsands, is reducing its workforce by 1,000 and cutting \$1 billion from its capital budget as the company grapples with plummeting crude prices.

Calgary-based Suncor says the job cuts will affect mainly contractors, but include some employee positions as well. In its annual report, Suncor said it had 13,946 employees.

In November, Suncor predicted capital spending for 2015 would range between \$7.2 billion and \$7.8 billion. At the time, crude was around \$75 US a barrel. U.S. crude settled at \$45.89 US a barrel on Tuesday, less than half of what it was six months ago.

"Cost management has been an ongoing focus, with successful efforts to reduce both capital and operating costs well underway before the decline in oil prices. However, in today's low crude price environment, it's essential we accelerate this work," Suncor CEO Steve Williams said in a release.

Projects that haven't yet been given a final go-ahead by Suncor's board are being deferred, such as expansions to the MacKay River steam-driven oilsands project in northeastern Alberta and the White Rose development off the east coast. But major projects under construction such as the \$13.5-billion Fort Hills mine north of Fort McMurray, Alta., and the Hebron field in offshore Newfoundland are moving ahead as planned.

Suncor expects the closely watched U.S. benchmark crude, West Texas Intermediate, to average \$59 US a barrel in 2015. Western Canadian Se-

Quoted

"Today's spending reductions are consistent with our commitment to spend within our means...."

Suncor CEO Steve Williams in a release

lect, the measure of Canadian heavy crude, is expected to be \$42 US a barrel. And Brent is predicted to average \$65 US a barrel.

On Monday, Canadian Natural Resources Ltd. announced it would slash its 2015 budget by 28 per cent. One of its oilsands projects called Kirby North is being deferred and drilling activity in Western Canada is going to be slowed substantially.

Canadian Natural said it does not foresee layoffs, but has frozen hiring.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute



DOLLAR
83.65¢ (+ 0.09¢)



TSX
14,187.16 (- 77.85)



OIL
\$45.89 US (- 18¢)



GOLD
\$1,234.40 US (+ \$1.60)

Natural gas: \$ 2.943 (+14.8¢)
Dow Jones: 17,613.68 (- 27.16)

Missing children

Facebook to show Amber Alerts on mobile devices

Facebook users in the U.S. will soon receive Amber Alerts to help find missing children who may be located near them.

Facebook Inc. is working with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children to send the alerts to users' mobile phones if they are in a search area where a child has been abducted.

Facebook says people are already using its site to encourage their friends and family to help find missing children, and that several children have been reunited with their families as a result of information shared on the site.

Last March, a missing 11-year-old girl was found in a South Carolina motel room when a motel clerk called police after seeing an Amber Alert on Facebook, according to the company and reports at the time.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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© 2015 Mercedes-Benz Canada Inc. 2015 GLK 250 BlueTEC 4MATIC Avantgarde with optional Sport package/2015 C 400 4MATIC with optional Sport package and optional Active LED High Performance Lighting System shown above for a total price of \$52,340/\$58,040. Total price of advertised 2015 GLK 250 BlueTEC 4MATIC Avantgarde/2015 C 300 4MATIC is \$51,240/\$45,640, which includes an MSRP of \$48,600/\$43,000 plus freight/PDI of \$1,995, dealer admin fee of \$495, air-conditioning levy of \$100, CHF tires of \$16, A/M/V/C Fee of 6.25 and PPSA of \$27.80. Lease and finance offers based on the advertised vehicles are available only through Mercedes-Benz Financial Services on approved credit for a limited time. **Lease example based on a 45/39 month term, a lease APR of 2.9%/4.9%, and an MSRP of \$48,600/\$43,000. Monthly payment is \$468/\$458 with down payment or equivalent trade of \$8,897/\$5,620 plus security deposit of \$500/\$500 and applicable taxes due at lease inception. Total obligation is \$30,425/\$23,949, 18,000/18,000 km/year allowance (\$0.20/\$0.20/km for excess kilometres applies). Finance example based on a 60/60 month term, a finance APR of 0.9%/3.9%, and an MSRP of \$48,600/\$43,000. Monthly payment is \$729/\$711 (excluding taxes) with \$7,497/\$6,940 down payment or equivalent trade. Cost of borrowing is \$985/\$3,958 for a total obligation of \$51,194/\$49,571. Vehicle license, insurance, registration, and taxes are extra. Dealer may lease or finance for less.† Receive up to a \$750 credit on Mercedes-Benz Financial Services protection products, available only through Mercedes-Benz Financial Services. Not all protection products are available in all provinces, on all vehicles or at all dealers. All products and services of Mercedes-Benz Financial Services and its affiliates are subject to the terms and conditions of the applicable governing agreements. Please contact your authorized Mercedes-Benz dealer for a full list of limitations and exclusions. Credit is only applicable on the lease or finance of a new 2015 B/C/CLA/GLA/GLK model and must be applied at the time of sale. No cash value. Offers may change without notice and cannot be combined with any other offers. Offers end January 31st, 2015.

VOICES

FALL IN LOVE RIGHT NOW

Try a little social experiment. Turn to the person sitting beside you on the train or bus and go through the 36-point exercise printed below. It could make you fall in love.

It apparently worked for Mandy Len Catron, a University of British Columbia writing teacher, who fell in love with a man after going through this very exercise and staring into his eyes for exactly four minutes.

The experiment was created more than 20 years ago by psychologist Arthur Aron, who says he successfully got strangers to fall in love by having them ask and answer a series of questions that gradually become more and more intimate. Len Catron recently wrote about her experience in the *New York Times*, detailing how she and an acquaintance recreated the experiment at a bar one night, and two hours later, were in love. Skeptical? Give these a try!



Grab a random stranger and start asking questions: It just might lead to love. ISTOCK

1. Given the choice of anyone in the world, whom would you want as a dinner guest?
2. Would you like to be famous? In what way?
3. Before making a telephone call, do you ever rehearse what you are going to say? Why?
4. What would constitute a "perfect" day for you?
5. When did you last sing to yourself? To someone else?
6. If you were able to live to the age of 90 and retain either the mind or body of a 30-year-old for the last 60 years of your life, which would you want?
7. Do you have a secret hunch about how you will die?
8. Name three things you and your partner appear to have in common.
9. For what in your life do you feel most grateful?
10. If you could change anything about the way

you were raised, what would it be?

11. Take four minutes and tell your partner your life story in as much detail as possible.

12. If you could wake up tomorrow having gained any one quality or ability, what would it be?

13. If a crystal ball could tell you the truth about yourself, your life, the future or anything else, what would you want to know?

14. Is there something that you've dreamt of doing for a long time? Why haven't you done it?

15. What is the greatest accomplishment of your life?

16. What do you value most in a friendship?

17. What is your most treasured memory?

18. What is your most terrible memory?

19. If you knew that in one year you would die

suddenly, would you change anything about the way you are now living? Why?

20. What does friendship mean to you?

21. What roles do love and affection play in your life?

22. Alternate sharing something you consider a positive characteristic of your partner. Share a total of five items.

23. How close and warm is your family? Do you feel your childhood was happier than most other people's?

24. How do you feel about your relationship with your mother?

25. Make three true "we" statements each. For instance, "We are both in this room feeling ..."

26. Complete this sentence: "I wish I had someone with whom I could share ..."

27. If you were going to become a close friend with

your partner, please share what would be important for him or her to know.

28. Tell your partner what you like about them; be very honest this time, saying things that you might not say to someone you've just met.

29. Share with your partner an embarrassing moment in your life.

30. When did you last cry in front of another person? By yourself?

31. Tell your partner something that you like about them already.

32. What, if anything, is too serious to be joked about?

33. If you were to die this evening with no opportunity to communicate with anyone, what would you most regret not having told someone? Why haven't you told them yet?

34. Your house, containing everything you own, catches fire. After saving your loved ones and pets, you have time to safely make a final dash to save any one item. What would it be? Why?

35. Of all the people in your family, whose death would you find most disturbing? Why?

36. Share a personal problem and ask your partner's advice on how he or she might handle it. Also, ask your partner to reflect back to you how you seem to be feeling about the problem you have chosen.

Don't forget to stare at each other for four minutes after

Et voilà! You should be deciding on the names of your children right about now. **METRO**

SO ... DID IT WORK?

Let us know at readers@metronews.ca

I broke my back sledding a decade ago, and I'm still suffering



DYLAN REARDON
readers@metronews.ca

I've watched the debate about whether cities should ban tobogganing with some interest. Sledding can be dangerous, and I think municipalities should have some control over where it happens. I should know. I broke my back a decade ago while sledding at Confederation Park in Calgary, and my life has been altered by that event.

On Boxing Day of 2003, my brother and I decided to go sledding. I hadn't been tobogganing in a decade and the weather was fantastic: Sunny, blue skies, mild temperature — there may have been Chinook that day.

Upon arriving at the hill, there were ominous signs that amused me at the time: a broken GT Snow Racer ski, pieces of shattered crazy carpets,

lost gloves, helmets, etc. Years later and after the fact, I like to refer to the scene as a toboggan graveyard. My brother went down the hill first on a large plastic disk. The snow was compact, presumably from thrill seekers leading up to that day, and because the weather was quite warm, the snow had melted and re-frozen a few times. As a result, he went like a bat out of hell as I watched anxiously.

It was my turn. I didn't even have a chance to put my legs back onto the toboggan before I was completely out of control. My journey down the hill seemed like minutes, and the whole time I was using my legs as breaks to try and slow my speed. And then, BAM! It was a feeling I have trouble describing. A feeling I cannot forget. My entire body felt like it was broken in half. All I felt was pain. It was fierce and relentless, and I've never felt anything like it since.

When I arrived at the hospital, they tied me down to a table for two weeks, before placing me in a body cast for six months. I had suffered a burst-compression fracture of my L1 vertebra.

While in hospital, I was told that tobogganing accidents are incredibly common, and one of the reasons for this is that the human derriere isn't built to absorb the extreme forces that come from tobogganing. Unlike, say, the knees when you're skiing.

Since the accident I've suffered from chronic pain and an inability to sit down or sleep for any length of time. I can walk, but in a very limited sense: typically no more than a few hundred metres before back pain gets too intense. When this happens, my legs also become weak.

The medications to deal with this are brutal, in that they make me incredibly tired and zombie-like. Since the break I've been losing more

and more feeling in my legs. About 40 per cent total loss right now. The reason for this is because over-compensation has led to increased degeneration of my spine directly above where I broke my back.

Like every sport or activity, tobogganing carries risks and dangers. My accident was a freak accident. I could have broken my neck on the boards playing hockey. I could have been hit in the head with a golf ball while on the back nine.

I do not agree with an outright ban, and limiting times and conditions seems like ridiculous government overreach. However, designating safe places to toboggan seems like a prudent course of action. There are inherent risks in any activity, but we can try to minimize those risks.

Dylan Reardon is a Calgary-based student and writer. He runs the satirical news website *Urban Anomie*.



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Gossip

NED EHRBAR

METRO'S TAKE ON
THE WORLD OF
CELEBRITIES



Leonardo DiCaprio GETTY IMAGES

Leo and RiRi play the flirting game



Rihanna GETTY IMAGES

Leonardo DiCaprio and Rihanna were spotted living it up together at a recent Playboy Mansion party, which admittedly sounds like a game of Hollywood gossip Mad-libs. But when it comes to how intimate they were getting, we're left with a different game all together: duelling anonymous sources.

One such source claims that DiCaprio and Rihanna were being

incredibly flirty, going so far as locking lips at the soiree.

But another? "No one was making out. They are just friends. That's it," the second source tells E! News. "There was a big group dancing. Tom Hardy, Naomi Campbell and a bunch of other people. Everyone was having a good time together. Maybe a little bit of friendly flirting, but no scandal here."

Oh, you're no fun.

And baby makes twee... Zooey expecting first child

The nice thing about all these celebrities having lifestyle websites is that they can handle all their big life announcements themselves.

Much like Blake Lively did last October on Preserve, New Girl star Zooey Deschanel has used Hello Giggles to reveal that she is pregnant. Deschanel and boyfriend Jacob Pechenik are expecting their first child together this summer.

"Jacob and I are over the moon. We are so excited to meet our little one," Deschanel says in a statement.

As of press time, there was no word on how chunky the baby's bangs would eventually be.



Zooey Deschanel GETTY IMAGES

Well, that's creepy! Jen on Billy Bob's to-do list

Everyone has goals, dreams, items on their bucket list, things they really want to do. For a newly minted Golden Globe winner, that includes Jennifer Aniston. Billy Bob Thornton did a bit of an overshare backstage at the Globes when Access Hollywood challenged him to a game of Would You Rather, pitting celebrities against each other to vie for the Fargo star's amorous attention. Asked to choose between Reese Witherspoon and Aniston, Thornton quickly replied, "Jennifer Aniston, lifelong goal. That's all I'm saying." A simple yes or no would have sufficed.

He even doubled down when presented with a choice between Aniston and Keira Knightley, saying, "Jennifer Aniston. How many times does it take you to get this through your head?"

The creepiness of his fixation aside, he at least gets high comedy marks for his response to the options of Bill Murray and Christoph Waltz: "I don't even know

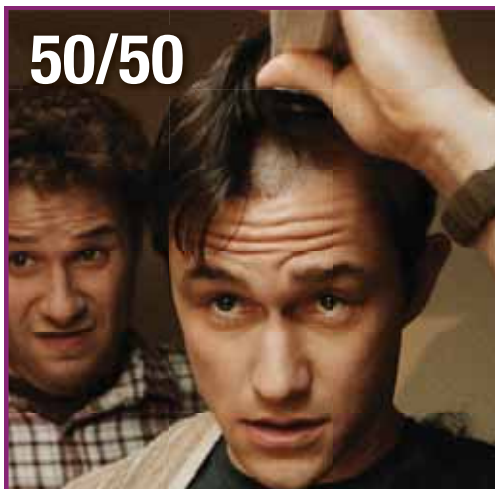
what the second one is, so Bill Murray." The second one, Mr. Thornton, is someone who has more Oscars than you. Just so you know.



Billy Bob Thornton, Jennifer Aniston GETTY IMAGES



50/50



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We'll miss you, good people of Pawnee: Bidding farewell to Parks and Recreation

Final season. Can we really live in a world with no more quotes from Ron Swanson? We'll just have to try

LISA WEIDENFELD
Metro in New York City

The sad day is finally upon us: We must now begin saying goodbye to Leslie Knope and the parks department on Parks and Recreation. The show started its final season last night, and while it has come close to being cancelled nearly every season it's been on, that doesn't make the prospect of saying farewell any easier.

Parks and Recreation found a devoted audience who loved its optimistic humour and careful creation of a fictional but delightful town. Here are the five things we'll miss most about the show.

Co-workers who actually like each other

- The cubicle drones of The Office often seemed to be living in a state of barely concealed distaste for each other, but Parks and Recreation has generally gone in the opposite direction, with the exception of poor Jerry. Or Gary. Or possibly Barry, by this point.
- As different as the various Parks department employees are, they've always been supportive of each other's endeavours, from Donna investing in the Snakehole Lounge with Tom to the way everyone pulled together for Leslie's ill-fated city councilwoman campaign.

The town of Pawnee, Ind.

We may not have known much about humble Pawnee at the beginning, but we've all grown to love the residents of the town (which we all know is First in Friendship, Fourth in Obesity).

And who hasn't enjoyed learning about the colourful Pawnee city mottoes? There was the time they got taken over by the cult of Zorp, or the time they claimed to be the birthplace of Julia Roberts, then got sued for it. Mostly, we'll miss the town's

historical murals, each of which is more offensive than the last.

Leslie Knope herself

At its best, the show found great ways to translate Amy Poehler's high-energy screen presence into a character who was both hugely dorky and inspirational.

Sure, she loved organizing everything in binders, and went overboard in every facet of her life, but Leslie was that rare comedic creation whose arc combined personal and

professional achievements in a way that made everyone root for her.

The couples

Remember the episode when April and Andy got married on a whim, only a few episodes after starting to date? It's unlikely anyone would have guessed those two would be the most stable relationship on the show, but the writers always found cute, funny ways to make them work as a couple, despite Andy's cluelessness and April's hatred of, well, everything.

And while we're happy Ron found love with Lucy Lawless' Diane, we're sad we won't get to see any new adventures between Ron and Tammy, because Nick Offerman and Megan Mullally brought just the right degree of crazy every time they were onscreen together.

It always warmed your heart

Parks has gotten a lot of credit over the years for the warmth of its humour. The show



Amy Poehler as Leslie Knope on Parks and Recreation. CONTRIBUTED

makes you laugh at the antics of its characters, but never sneers at them or asks viewers to mock them. Sure, we knew most of Tom's business schemes were doomed to failure, but he's now started a few

successful ones, and no one on the show treated him like he was a fool for dreaming of a life beyond Pawnee. And as outlandish as Leslie's behaviour got, the people around her always loved her for it.

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LES BALLETS TROCKADERO DE MONTE CARLO SWAN LAKE | PHOTO: SASCHA VOUGHS

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Pete Hammond, *Deadline*

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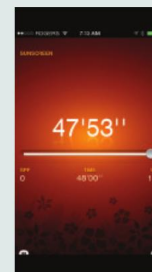
Save money at the airport

1. Rather than shelling out a taxi fare at the airport's front door, persuade a friend or relative to drive you.
2. Take a bus, train or the local transit to and from the airport, even if it means leaving home earlier — and packing lighter.
3. Take an empty water bottle through security, then fill it up on the other side. You don't need to pay \$5 for a bottle of water.
4. Coffee up at home.
5. Bring foods that are easy to pack — sushi, sandwiches — and skip departure lounge food.
6. Avoid the shops! Bring books, magazines and sundries like batteries with you. **DOUG WALLACE/METRO**

Tool

Sunscreen app

Heading south? Load this free app onto your phone to keep sunburns to a minimum. You enter your location, skin type and the SPF of your lotion. The app then detects the UV Index rating of your sunny spot and sets a timer to alert you when it's time to apply more sunscreen. It also comes with info on health precautions to help you avoid the dreaded lobster look and other more serious problems. Free for Android and iOS. **DOUG WALLACE/METRO**



Deals

Cuba for less

Cuba has always been the cheap and cheerful route for a week at the beach. Sunwing is making it even more attractive with deals on a few all-inclusive Cuban resorts they've recently started to work with, including up to 45 per cent off the new, 530-room Memories Holguin Beach Resort in Holguin. Get up to 20 per cent off at the new five-star Royalton Hicacos Resort & Spa in Varadero and up to 25 per cent off at the new Starfish Cayo Santa Maria, which is gigantic at 1,300+ rooms. Visit Sunwing.ca.

DOUG WALLACE/METRO



National Geographic explores the tourism business

Thatched bungalows in the rainforest of Costa Rica and luxurious tents in the Australian Outback are among some of the properties chosen to form National Geographic's new collection of boutique hotels and lodges. Launched as the National Geographic Unique Lodges of the World, properties chosen were judged on factors such as design and character, guest experience and quality of service, and sustainability practices. The initial collection includes 24 lodges that span the world, from Australia to Canada, and includes Newfoundland's Fogo Island Inn (pictured above). Special NatGeo packages are also being launched within the group that offer add-ons such as a private sunset wildlife cruise at the Nimmo Bay Wilderness Lodge in B.C., or a private tour and outing with an on-site scientist at The Brando in French Polynesia. **TEXT AND PHOTO: AFP**



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The Desert Botanical Garden has the largest collection of cacti in North America.



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Gateway to the great outdoors

Phoenix. Urban sophistication meets thrilling adventure

VAWN HIMMELSBACH
For Metro

Phoenix is one of the sunniest cities in the U.S. — but it's not just for snowbirds looking to escape the harsh Canadian winter.

As the gateway to the Grand Canyon, Phoenix is set against a backdrop of rugged mountains in one of the

lushest deserts in the world. But it also has a sophisticated urban scene, with boutique hotels and luxury spas, plenty of nightlife, and some of the best southwestern food around.

"It's a wonderful place for our northern friends to thaw out and leave their parkas behind," said Douglas MacKenzie, media relations

director with Visit Phoenix.

The city's dependable sunshine makes outdoor activities a way of life — whether rappelling into a wet canyon or enjoying a craft cocktail on a poolside patio.

In the fall and winter, the climate is ideal for hiking and biking (in the spring, blooming wildflowers carpet the desert).

Hike the Cholla Trail on Camelback Mountain or the numerous trails in the Phoenix Mountain Preserve. Or check out the views from a hot air balloon, on a Jeep tour or while riding a horse.

While there are plenty of culinary options, Phoenix is known for its authentic southwestern and Mexican fare. Kai is the only Five Diamond Native American restaurant in the world, while the locals head to Los Dos Molinos for no-fuss traditional Mexican.

Phoenix offers a range of hip boutique hotels and luxury resorts with spas and golf courses, but there's also the unique option of staying at a dude ranch for a true cowboy experience. Or step into luxury at the Arizona Biltmore (Frank Lloyd Wright

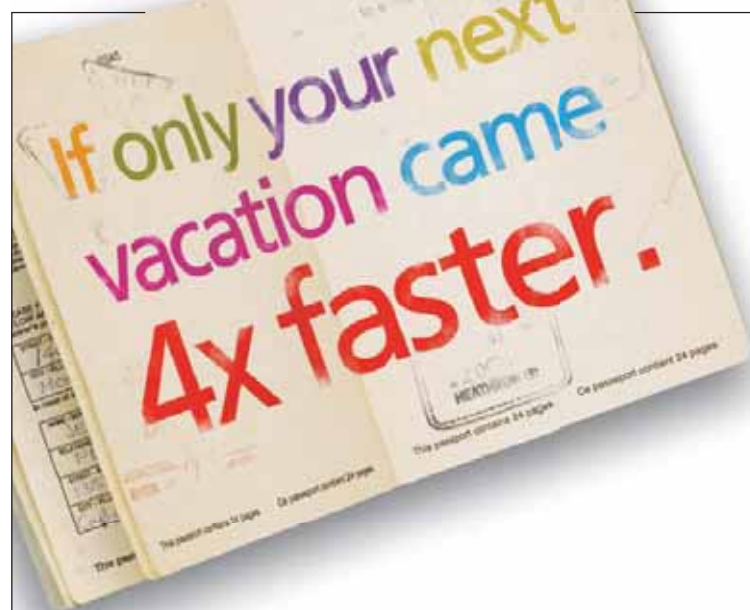
served as consulting architect).

"We have 62,000 hotel rooms in the Greater Phoenix Area and one to fit everyone's budget from economical to five-star luxury," said MacKenzie. Phoenix is also known for its spa scene, offering everything from mud wraps to hot golf ball massages.

There's also plenty worth seeing around town. "The Heard Museum has the largest collection of Native American artifacts (and) the Desert Botanical Garden has the largest collection of cacti in North America," said MacKenzie.

Unique adventures

- Phoenix has an emerging craft beer scene, with a dozen or so breweries and more than 60 wineries in the area. Imbibe on a craft brewery tour or a "water to wine" kayaking tour where you paddle between three different vineyards.
- Arizona offers some of the world's top canyoneering. Several operators offer adventures for different skill levels — from bouldering and rappelling to exploring wet canyons.



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Explore the winding trails of Wales

Hiking haven. This rugged country offers both epic journeys and leisurely walks

Looking for a hiking vacation that's off the beaten track but guaranteed to delight with an array of trails for all skill sets, amazing views, quaint accommodations, a wealth of history and top-notch cuisine?

Consider Wales.

The mountainous country, part of the United Kingdom, is bordered by England in the east, the Irish Sea to the north and west and the Bristol Channel in the south.

There are several world-class hiking regions, all distinct, all worth seeing, and situated close enough to one another that most of Wales can be explored in as little as a week via rental car.

There are no direct Canadian flights to Wales, but fly into any of the major London airports and connect to either Cardiff, Swansea or Liverpool.

From Liverpool, it's a quick jaunt into the northern reaches of Wales, where you can start your hiking vacation in the Llandudno and Colwyn Bay area.

The hiking highlight of the region is the Great Orme, a coastal landmark more than 200 metres above sea level with Stone Age origins.

There's a circular walk around the headland that starts and finishes at the summit, providing spectacular views of Liverpool Bay and the Irish Sea, the Carneddau mountains, the island of Anglesey and the Menai Strait — a stretch of which is called the "swellies" by locals due to its hazardous whirlpools and surges.

History lovers shouldn't miss Conwy Castle, built by Edward I during his conquest of Wales between 1283 and 1289. It's among the best-preserved medieval fortifications in Britain, and visitors can wander its battlements at will.

From Colwyn Bay, veer southwest into the grandeur of Snowdonia.

The famously stunning re-



A hiker takes in the view at Snowdonia. THE CANADIAN PRESS

gion is dotted with picturesque villages. Stop at Betws-y-coed on your drive in, an impossibly pretty riverside hamlet with a cosy pub located at the Ty Gwyn Hotel and featuring an excellent menu. The local steamed mussels and salt-marsh lamb

shouldn't be missed.

To work off your lunch, there are trails for hikers of all capabilities. Expert climbers can take on the seven-hour hike up Mount Snowdon, the highest peak in south Britain, via the Crib's Goch knife-edge

ridge, but there are plenty of other shorter, less hair-raising hikes through the dramatic hills of the region.

From Snowdonia, veer back northwest to Anglesey. The highlight of the island is the spectacular South Stack Light-

If you go...

Check out the Visit Wales website at visitwales.com for accommodation options, including cottage rentals, working farms, camper vans and hiking recommendations. Wales Tourists Online (walestouristsonline.co.uk) also has an extensive database of accommodation options.

house, perched on another rugged, windswept isle joined to Anglesey by an aluminum bridge and open for exploration by tourists. There are plenty of hiking trails in the area, including an hour-long hike that starts in Breakwater Country Park in nearby Holyhead and leads to South Stack. The Anglesey Coastal Path also passes by South Stack.

The only possible downside to a Welsh hiking vacation? The rain. Pack rain gear, because all-day sunny hiking weather is rarely a guarantee.

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Charming colonial Curaçao

Beyond the beach.

This little Dutch colony has incredible architecture, shipwrecks and diving



ON THE MOVE
Loren Christie
life@metronews.ca

If you're looking to sunbathe all day long, the island of Curaçao may not be your best choice. But if you're a snorkeller, scuba diver, foodie, history junkie, golfer or culture vulture, this former Dutch colony — located approximately 60 kilometres off the coast of Venezuela — is the perfect vacation destination.

The unique capital of Willemstad is a bustling port city that earned UNESCO World Heritage status in 1997 due to its incredible collection of Dutch colonial architecture. Picture the unique gabled houses of Amsterdam painted in vibrant pastels and peppered with palm



The lighthouse on Klein-Curaçao is a spectacular site. PETER REMUS/METRO

trees. The vibe is strongly Dutch, but the influences of Spanish, English and the local Papiamentu people are also evident in all aspects of life including the music and cuisine. The food at the Gouverneur de Rouville reflects the cosmopolitan makeup of the island and the service, ambiance and views at this charming heritage building overlooking the harbour are outstanding.

The island's beaches, a mix of both public and private access, are small and tend to be crowded. How-

ever, for snorkellers and divers, beaches such as Playa Kalki and Playa Lagun make great welcome mats to an entire ocean of coral and exotic fish.

Devoid of permanent populations, the tiny neighbouring island of Klein-Curaçao offers a long stretch of white sand beach as well as an abandoned lighthouse and two shipwrecks to explore. It's well worth the two-hour boat trip there and back, but be warned: The sometimes rocky voyage is not for people with sensitive stomachs.

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**COOK
TIME**
ABOUT 30
MINUTES

This recipe serves four. EMILY RICHARDS

Chili beyond ground beef and beans

Mixed Veggie and Steak Chili. This refreshing take on the classic dish doesn't take much time or effort

Try making chili with steak next time you have a hankering during the week. It's just as easy as using ground beef but has a chunkier texture, which is a nice change.

You can use stir-fry strips if you don't want to slice the steak yourself, but slicing takes no time at all.

Use your favourite fresh peppers or mushrooms, but to make this in a snap, why not check what's available in your

freezer and bulk up the pot with a variety of frozen veg?

Pick up a few bags when they are on sale and then you will be ready to whip up this dish or serve up a variety of veggies with your favourite meal.

This chili is perfect served up with a crunchy salad.

Directions

1. In large shallow saucepan or Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat and brown steak. Remove to plate.

2. Add onion, garlic, chili powder, oregano and cumin and cook, stirring for 5 minutes or until softened. Stir in tomatoes, frozen vegetables, beans and tomato paste; bring to boil. Stir in steak; reduce heat and simmer

Ingredients

- 1 tsp (5 ml) canola oil
- 1 sirloin grilling steak (about 12 oz/375 g), in 1/2 inch (1 cm) pieces
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp (15 ml) chili powder
- 1 tsp (5 ml) each dried oregano leaves and ground cumin
- 1 can (28 oz/796 ml) diced tomatoes
- 2 cups (500 ml) mixed frozen vegetables
- 1 can (19 oz/540 ml) red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 1/4 cup (60 ml) tomato paste

for about 20 minutes or until chili is thickened. EMILY RICHARDS

Give your portfolio a noticeable pick-me-up

Career. This is your professional identity in one package, so be sure to make it pop

CELINE
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Many professionals make the mistake of thinking that they don't need a portfolio because they don't have anything to put in one. Here's how to put together a professional portfolio that will help you showcase your work, highlight your skill set, and can serve as a valuable career planning tool.



You will often need references from your manager when looking for a new job. You can use a portfolio to help guide your manager to highlight what is important to the new job, not just what they can remember you worked on. ISTOCK

What is it? What should you include in it?

This is not a resumé; it's a collection of your professional achievements. Unlike a resumé, there's no page limit, so it should include all the projects you've worked on, recommendations, reference letters, awards, side projects, publications, a listing of conferences and events you have attended or spoken at, courses and workshops, and anything else you feel is relevant to your professional life.

Why do it?

To jog your memory and your manager's:

Simply put, most people are terrible at remembering things. Unless you write down and reflect on relevant and important experiences, it's easy to forget about them.

If you forget about your own achievements, what are the chances a potential employer will remember? It's important to document and showcase what you have accomplished so you can communicate more effectively with your manager about how you have contributed to the team, and demonstrate ways you have gone above and beyond.

Putting it together

How you actually collect everything and organize it is up to you.

- Maybe it's a formal hard-copy document that you use publicly and share with others. Maybe it's just an informal folder on your computer where you keep relevant documents for your eyes only.
- However you choose to do

it, the thing that matters is that you are keeping track of all the amazing work you are doing, and keeping it up to date and relevant.

- Set a recurring calendar date with yourself each month and commit to revisiting your portfolio to reflect on your experiences so far, update it with new information, and plan for the month ahead.

To help you land your next job:

As you advance your career, this tool should also make it easier for you to quickly gather and comment on relevant work experience. For example, if you're in PR and applying for a marketing job, you should be able to look to your portfolio and very easily gather all the marketing-related projects you have worked on and identify the overlapping skill sets because you have carefully organized and tracked them over the years.

Career planning and development:

As you go through the exercise of putting together your portfolio, and continue to add to it over time, patterns will start to emerge. Maybe you notice that all of your projects have been internal and you need some more client-facing experience.

Or that you've been to five social media workshops this year, and you still haven't put up your hand to run the next Twitter campaign.

It should help you identify where you are over- or under-indexed in certain areas, highlight gaps in your skill set, and draw your attention to opportunities for personal development.

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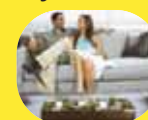


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Packing your lunch like a professional

Career. Six tips that will help you prepare homemade, healthy lunches simply and swiftly

**RIANA
TOPAN**

TalentEgg.ca

Is healthy eating one of your resolutions for 2015? A great way to achieve that is by packing a lunch for school or work. It will save you a lot of money in the long run, too. Here's how to get started.

Plan ahead

Plot out four weeks' worth of meal ideas in a calendar or schedule. Choose options you enjoy, that you can make in advance and that are easy to transport. Repeat your plan every month, and mix it up when you get tired of certain meals, or to reflect what you have in your kitchen. Sketching out your meals for the month will take away the stress of trying to come up with new ideas all



Having an ammo of healthy snacks at the ready will help to curb your cravings throughout the day. iStock

the time. It will also mean you know exactly what you need to buy each week to prepare your lunches, saving you time in the grocery store. If you're trying to save money or prefer to eat locally, adjust your meal plan seasonally, and check what's on sale at the start of each month to stock up on non-perishables, then incorporate those into your meal plan.

Prepare meals in batches

You can save time by preparing

multiple meals at once, because it cuts down on the overall time you have to spend washing, chopping, cooking, portioning and cleaning up. Block off a couple of hours each week to prepare your lunches for the next five days (Sundays are great if your schedule allows).

If you don't already have one, invest in a Tupperware set that includes different sizes for your main meal, snacks, sauces and accompaniments. Having four to six good-sized contain-

ers will mean you can pre-portion several meals at once. Opt for glass containers or BPA-free plastic.

Strive for balance

Although you should stick to meals that don't take long to prepare, you don't want to sacrifice nutrition. The key to a healthy meal is ensuring that it's well rounded. Ideally, your lunch should be proportioned as follows: half your plate should be vegetables and/or fruit, a quarter should be protein and the other quarter should be grains.

Keeping this in mind means you can toss together a balanced meal that will keep you satisfied until dinner, as long as you choose healthy options.

Use what you have on hand; try beans, legumes, nuts, seeds and lean meats for your protein, whole grains like brown rice, quinoa, and whole wheat noodles for your grains and a variety of fresh produce for the fruit/vegetable portion of your meal.

Keep your kitchen well stocked

Always make sure you have the ingredients for a quick go-to lunch in case you don't have time to go shopping or spend more than a few minutes preparing your next midday meal.

Sandwiches are great when you're pressed for time, so keep a loaf of whole wheat bread in

your fridge or freezer and have nut butters, jams, vegetables, cheese or cold cuts on hand.

Having a well-stocked kitchen ensures you're less likely to run into a situation where making a meal at home isn't an option. If everything you need is already right in front of you, you'll be less tempted to buy food out.

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Aaron Hernandez

Judge in murder trial denies CNN's juror request

The judge overseeing the murder trial of former New England Patriots player Aaron Hernandez has turned down a request from CNN that the questioning of prospective jurors be done in a way that the public can hear.

Bristol County Superior Court Judge Susan Garsh responded Monday to a letter sent by CNN last week. The letter expressed concerns that the plan to question prospective jurors out of the public's hearing violates the First Amendment.

Garsh says Massachusetts' Supreme Judicial Court found it was constitutional to question them out of the public's hearing, as long as the public could see the proceeding.

The first phase of jury selection is due to end Tuesday. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Broncos

Elway pushes for Manning return

If John Elway gets to choose, his quarterback next season will be Peyton Manning.

During a news conference Tuesday, Elway said he did not press Manning for a decision on his future when they met the day after Denver's 24-13 loss to Indianapolis in the AFC divisional playoffs.

The Broncos executive vice-president said he expects to reconvene with Manning in about a month to see where he stands.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB

Royals extend Yost's contract

The Kansas City Royals and Ned Yost have agreed on a one-year contract extension that will keep the manager with the franchise through the 2016 season.

Yost said after leading the Royals to an American League pennant last season that he hoped to manage a few more years. His contract had been set to expire after the 2015 season.

Yost will soon become the club's winningest manager. He has 373 victories, trailing only Dick Howser (404) and Whitey Herzog (410). **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**



Sabres retire The Dominator's No. 39

Dominik Hasek stands next to a plaque with his number in the entrance to the Sabres' locker-room on Tuesday in Buffalo. The Sabres paid tribute to their former star goalie by retiring his No. 39 in a banner-raising ceremony before their home game against the Detroit Red Wings. The player nicknamed "The Dominator," who also played for the Red Wings, Ottawa Senators and Chicago Blackhawks, was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in November. **HARRY SCULL JR./THE BUFFALO NEWS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Oilers' road blues persist in St. Louis

NHL. Edmonton loses 13th straight game away from Rexall Place

On Tuesday

4

Blues

2

Oilers

Vladimir Tarasenko scored his 24th goal and had an assist, defenceman Barret Jackman earned his second two-point night of the season, and the St. Louis Blues beat the Edmonton Oilers 4-2 Tuesday night for their fifth straight victory.

Benoit Pouliot scored twice in the third period for Edmonton, but the Oilers mustered a season-low 15 shots and never got closer than a two-goal deficit.

David Backes also had a goal and assist while Jaden Schwartz and Alexander Steen had goals for St. Louis, which allowed just 15 shots — a season best — to make it somewhat easy on goalie Jake Allen.

They twice had surrendered 16 shots, including an overtime victory over Edmonton in November at home.

Ben Scrivens made 25 saves but fell to 0-5-5 on the road for Edmonton, which is 0-7-6 during a 13-game road losing streak. The Oilers are last overall in the NHL with a league-low two road victories.

Allen made his first start in eight games but was coming off a strong relief effort Saturday in St. Louis' comeback 5-4 shootout victory over Carolina.

Tarasenko and Backes scored on consecutive shots late in the first period to put St. Louis up 2-0. Scrivens got most of the puck on Tarasenko's shot from the circle, but it slid under a pad with 6:11 left, and Backes converted a back-



Blues goalie Jake Allen makes a stick save on a shot from Oilers forward Jordan Eberle on Tuesday in St. Louis. **TOM GANNAM/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

hand setup from Jori Lehtera about two minutes later.

Schwartz deflected a point shot from Jackman for a 3-0 bulge early in the third. Scrivens had the shot covered but the puck slid in just inside the opposite post.

Pouliot has a three-game goal streak and has eight goals in 26 games overall for Edmonton.

Steen scored his 13th goal late in the third for his 400th career point.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

4 SPORTS

NBA

Wolves' Williams torches Pacers

Mo Williams scored a career-high 52 points, most in the NBA this season, and the Minnesota Timberwolves snapped a 15-game losing streak with a 110-101 victory over the Indiana Pacers on Tuesday night.

Williams made six three-pointers, including one that gave Minnesota a 102-96 lead. Andrewiggins added 20 points and Gorgui Dieng had 10 for the Timberwolves (6-31), who won for the first time since beating Portland 90-82 on Dec. 10.

C.J. Miles had 22 points and C.J. Watson added 17 for the Pacers (15-25), who have lost three of four.

Wiggins scored on a put-back dunk and then converted a three-pointer to give the Timberwolves a 93-90 lead with 4:29 remaining.

But it was mostly Williams who powered the Wolves to just their third road victory this season.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Road to conference finals bumpy for NFL's final four

NFL playoffs. Patriots, Seahawks, Packers and Colts have all overcome snags early in season

There are the 2007 Patriots, a juggernaut, and the 2014 not-so-dominant version.

There are the current Seahawks, not quite as fearsome as last year's championship edition.

Throw in a Packers team that doesn't much resemble the Lombardi squads, and a group of Colts who have experienced more ups and downs this season than the rest of this final four.

Yes, it's been a long and winding road to the conference title games for New England, Seattle, Green Bay and Indianapolis.

The Seahawks were 3-3 and

Quoted



"We don't want to be the best team Week 1 and then basically shut it down for the remainder of the season. We want to grow and get better week in and week out, and in doing so you're going to take some tough losses, and you have to learn from them and bounce back."

Colts defensive end Cory Redding on peaking during the playoffs

fighting off the championship hangover in October. They've won 10 of 11 since, and their defence became immovable once all-pro inside linebacker Bobby Wagner returned from a right foot injury.

"When I went into this year with the thought that this is a very unique chance at showing that you can handle all of that — it's been difficult for people and the history of it shows you that it's hard to

come back and get yourself back into this kind of position again," Seahawks coach Pete Carroll said. "So this is exactly where we'd hoped we would be right now."

Just as much in the doldrums back in early autumn as the Seahawks: Tom Brady and the Patriots. They were 2-2, coming off an ugly loss at Kansas City in prime time.

The three-time Super Bowl winner had little cohesion

with a mediocre group of wideouts other than Julian Edelman. Star tight end Rob Gronkowski was slowly coming back from injuries that basically wiped out his previous season. Questions abounded concerning the running game, the offensive line, and a defence that had been torched in two of the first four games.

In the next 12 weeks, the Patriots won 10 times. Between Oct. 5 and

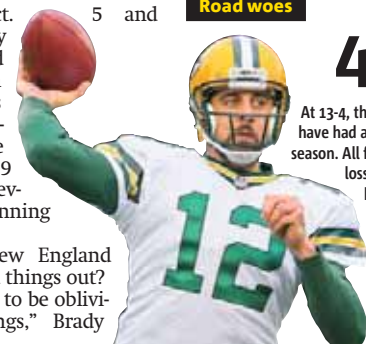
said of commentaries that the Patriots were no longer elite. "We all have TVs or the Internet, or the questions I get and the emails that I get from people that are concerned. Nobody died or anything. It's just a loss and I think we've always done a great job putting losses behind us quickly."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Road woes

4

At 13-4, the Packers have had a successful season. All four of their losses, however, have come on the road, where they are 4-4. They play in Seattle on Sunday.



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Market position

Chrysler's purchase by Fiat has given it access to new engineering, including the Alfa Romeo chassis under the 200. The company is now catching up in the small and midsize markets thanks to these Italian partners.

Points

- The all-wheel system disconnects the rear axle when not required, to improve fuel economy, but sends power to the back wheels whenever needed for extra traction.
- The transmission is shifted by a dial, which frees up console space.
- An optional self-parking feature works on parallel or perpendicular parking spots (and does a very good job).



The interior is lovely, with soft-touch materials and excellent finish.

Interesting features

Eight airbags and active front head restraints are standard issue. Also available are blind-spot monitoring, cross-traffic alert, a self-parking feature, ventilated seats and navigation.

Getting back into the game

Review. Alfa Romeo chassis helps redesigned Chrysler 200 compete in the tough midsize family sedan category

JIL MCINTOSH
drive@metronews.ca

Midsize sedans are an important segment, and if you're going to make it here, you've got to bring ammunition.

This has usually been a weak point for Chrysler, but it's finally in the game with the 200 sedan, which has been completely redesigned for 2015. It still has some flaws, but it's finally strong enough to tackle the competitors.

The base engine is a 2.4-litre four-cylinder making 184 horsepower, which is available in all four trim levels (LX, Limited, 200S, and 200C). My tester was optioned with the 3.6-litre V6 that can be added to the S and C trims. Mine also had all-wheel drive, which can be ordered only with the V6.

Both engines use a nine-speed automatic transmission. The ninth gear is a bit of overkill, as I was only ever able to



PHOTOS: JIL MCINTOSH

get into it on a flat stretch of highway. Even then, I had to use the steering-wheel paddle shifter to manually engage it, and on the slightest incline, the transmission slipped back into eighth gear.

The engine is smooth, but its published fuel consumption is higher than many of its V6-powered rivals, and in combined driving, I averaged 10.4 l/100 km.

The redesigned interior is

lovely, with soft-touch materials, excellent fit and finish, and comfortable seats that are clad in soft leather on the top-line 200C.

A heated steering wheel is standard on that trim, but there's some form over function, here. The wheel is enhanced with a chrome ring, which stays ice cold on winter mornings while the rest of the wheel heats up — defeating the entire purpose.

Small-item storage looks limited at first, but you find a ton of space once you start looking. In addition to a console box and an open bin under the shifter, the entire top of the console slides back, revealing a huge hidden cubby.

The 200 can feel a bit pricey at its upper end, but the mid-range models seem right in line. If you're in the market for midsize sedan, there's a new player in town.

Compare



1 Toyota Camry V6
Base price: \$33,650
Also redesigned for 2015, the Camry features more aggressive styling and improved driving dynamics.



2 Kia Optima SX Turbo
Base price: \$34,895
Optima's optional turbo-charged engine makes 274 hp and boosts driving fun.



3 Nissan Altima 3.5
Base price: \$33,498
Long drives remain comfortable thanks to the zero gravity design of the seats, which reduces fatigue.

5
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Shift: From hybrids, technology, new vehicles and the environment, to saving money at the pumps



Toyota says its new Mirai hydrogen fuel-cell car is just as groundbreaking as the Prius gas-electric hybrid was when it was introduced in 1997. But it will need a network of fuelling stations to really catch on.

Toyota's fuel-cell model could match Prius as a game-changer

Just as Toyota's Prius gasoline-electric hybrid changed the auto industry, so will its recently unveiled 2016 Mirai hydrogen fuel-cell sedan, the company suggests. Bob Carter, the company's head of auto operations, says the Mirai could equal the impact the Prius had on the industry. But it won't happen overnight, he adds, because fuel-cell cars currently lack a nationwide fuelling infrastructure. Even in California where the Mirai will be initially sold, only a handful of fuelling stations exist. However, Carter tells Automotive News that Toyota is expecting 23 new fuelling stations will be built in the Los Angeles and San Francisco areas by the time the Mirai launches there later this year.

ALL STORIES AND PHOTOS FROM WHEELBASEMEDIA.COM

Ghosn thinks electrics are the answer

With global sales of the all-electric Nissan Leaf up by 20 per cent this year, Renault-Nissan CEO Carlos Ghosn sees almost unlimited opportunity for future plug-in electrics. He says the 200,000 EVs sold globally by Renault-Nissan represents a savings of nearly 200 million litres of oil, "fuel that was not extracted, shipped or burned into the atmosphere." EVs also increase consumer choice. "As the internal engine monopoly crumbles, consumers will enjoy even more mainstream EV options and range." Their biggest advantage, Ghosn said, is that EVs can tap into existing infrastructure, unlike hydrogen fuel-cell vehicles that require all-new infrastructure.



Nissan boss Carlos Ghosn says battery electrics are better than hydrogen electrics because the infrastructure is already here.

Shift points

- Porsche's technology flagship, the 918 hybrid/hyper sports car, has sold out — with all 918 units spoken for within nine months. That's impressive considering it started at \$997,000 Cdn.
- Californians now buy one plug-in electric car for every two hybrids sold there, says Electric Vehicle News. In the state where the Toyota Prius hybrid is the best-selling car line, battery electric and plug-in hybrids account for 3.2 per cent of vehicles sold.
- The near global move to produce smaller engines is being advanced by the development of electric turbochargers, which enable instant extra power at lower engine speeds and eliminate turbo lag.

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Honda Civic, Canada's best-selling car 17 years in a row, offers championship value and just keeps getting better. Bold styling highlights the exterior while newly available features such as Honda LaneWatch™ blind spot display*, a 7" Display Audio System* with HondaLink™ Next Generation and the proximity key entry system with pushbutton start showcase its interior skills. Add to that the available continuously variable transmission (CVT) and multi-angle rearview camera* with guidelines, and it's easy to see why the well-rounded Civic is a Canadian favourite.



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Hyundai Santa Cruz
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Anti-pickup turns heads at auto show in Detroit

Autopilot. Hyundai aims for a different breed of truck buyers with its Santa Cruz



AUTO PILOT
Mike Goetz
drive@metronews.ca

All of which couldn't be more different than Hyundai's Santa Cruz concept, which is being promoted as a new truck for a different generation of buyers.

Pickup trucks were front and centre at this year's auto show in Detroit, proudly showing off their trademark attributes, such as powerful engines, impressive workload and off-road capabilities, and in-your-face attitudes. There was also one odd-looking pickup that wants nothing to do with working for living, racing in the Mexican desert, or scaring young children with aggressive styling. But before I get too deep into Hyundai's Santa Cruz concept, let's run down three traditional pickups that made news in Detroit, to better appreciate the dichotomy between them and the Cruz.

According to Hyundai, those buyers are younger, more female, more urban, and would dearly love a vehicle that is as inexpensive and manoeuvrable around town as a small crossover, but with one major difference: the ability to separate their dirty, wet or smelly cargo from the passenger compartment — cargo such as mountain bikes, camping equipment, firewood, hockey equipment, etc.

Hyundai calls these people urban adventurers. They are committed to their city lifestyle, but also like to get out on the weekend and do stuff outdoors.

Both lifestyles would benefit from a pickup, but they don't want to drive a big, expensive pickup around town the rest of the time.

"We're not trying to attract truck buyers, so max towing, ground-clearance and max payload is not the point at all," said Mark Dipko, head of product planning at Hyundai America.

"Research tells us that not everyone that needs an open bed wants that capability or the trade-offs that come with a traditional pickup."

Hyundai says the Santa Cruz is its most-researched concept ever, and the automaker is convinced it would be a hit with its intended audience.

Some cool features on the concept include a 2.0-litre turbo diesel engine, a tailgate extension that makes the bed as long as a midsize pickup bed, mini doors for the rear-seat passengers, and a lockable and rigid tonneau cover.

2016 Nissan Titan: An all-new Titan, with a stouter frame, a new Cummins V8 diesel engine good for 310 hp and 550 lb.-ft. of torque, and a massive front grille worthy of a Mack 18-wheeler

2016 Toyota Tacoma: The first really big update on Tacoma in a decade. I asked Kevin Hunter, head of the Toyota's California design studio, about the desert-racer theme and the very blunt front end. "We like it," he told me. "We just think it's a fist hitting something; that's the way we look at it. Robust. Strong. Powerful. Looks like if you hit something, you wouldn't get any damage on your truck."



Toyota's 2016 Tacoma is its first major redesign in a decade. MIKE GOETZ

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2009 to 2013
Honda Pilot

JUSTIN
PRITCHARD
drive@metronews.ca

Honda replaced its first-generation Pilot for 2009 with a model that boasts updated styling, technology, feature content and an even bigger body.

Longer, wider and taller than the original machine, the eight-passenger Pilot needed the makeover to survive in a market jammed with increasingly fierce competitors.

LX and SE models are more basic in terms of feature content, with the EX-L at the top of the range.

Common Issues

Some durability complaints focus on the brakes, with numerous owners reporting much-shorter-than-expected life to components. Watch for a throbbing pulse in the pedal during light to moderate stops, which is a sign that

the rotors are warped and the braking system needs attention. If in doubt, ask a mechanic to take a closer look.

Also ask the mechanic to look for signs of leaks, especially around the radiator, transmission cooler lines, transmission and rear differential. Any of these should be relatively easy to spot.

The suspension should also be inspected, especially for signs of excessive wear to the lower front control arm bushings. If these are cracked or appear to be leaking, they'll need to be replaced.

Check all on-board features and electronics, including the motorized seat adjusters, windows, locks, the rear-seat climate control, remote key fob and sunroof.

Some owners report a growling sound and vibration from the engine compartment when it shifts into Eco mode, deactivating unneeded cylinders. Drive on a flat surface with the throttle applied very lightly to coax the Pilot into this mode, and note any vibrations or sounds.

Some owners have reported issues with excessive oil consumption.



CONTRIBUTED

What owners like



Owners tend to rate a multitude of characteristics highly, including seat comfort, abundant storage, overall flexibility, a great driving position, confident all-surface traction and an overall blend of go-anywhere, anytime size, flexibility and capability.

What owners dislike



Gripes include a learning curve to voice-command systems, cramped third-row seats, and rougher and louder-than-expected ride in some models.

Engines



All models get a 3.5-litre V6 engine with 250 horsepower, and most models in the used market will include Honda's self-activating four-wheel-drive system with an available 'locking' mode for enhanced traction.

The verdict

Most of the Pilot's common issues will be easy to spot on a test drive or mechanic's inspection. If the Pilot you're considering gets a clean bill of health, you're well on your way to enjoying a spacious, flexible and capable family hauler.



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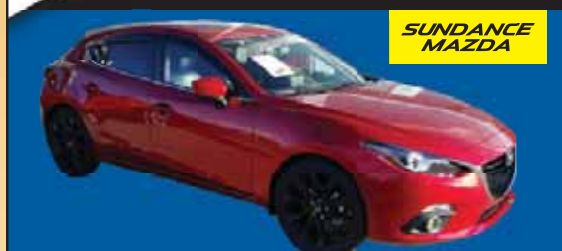
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Horoscopes by Sally Brompton

Aries

March 21 - April 20

Be less predictable, especially when dealing with people in positions of power. Too many people are taking you for granted — and will continue to do until you do something.

Taurus

April 21 - May 21

There are a lot of people out there who could benefit from your brand of kindness, so start looking for ways you can assist.

Gemini

May 22 - June 21

With your ruler Mercury strong today you are in a can-do mood but you may have to deal with people who seem incapable of making decisions. Stay calm.

Cancer

June 22 - July 23

Today's positive cosmic influences suggest you can ask for almost anything you want and partners and loved ones will hand it over with no questions asked.

Leo

July 24 - Aug. 23

You are advised not to take money issues too seriously today, not because they don't matter but because you may well be looking at them from completely the wrong angle.

Virgo

Aug. 24 - Sept. 23

A little of what you fancy today will do you the world of good. Don't listen to those who say it is wrong to enjoy yourself when so many others are finding it tough. Show the world how easy it is to have fun.

Libra

Sept. 24 - Oct. 23

Everything seems to be going so well that you may get a bit suspicious and start wondering if it's all too good to be true. On the contrary, loved ones will do anything for you. Enjoy it.

Scorpio

Oct. 24 - Nov. 22

Nothing is beyond you. That may sound too good to be true but you really can accomplish something remarkable over the next two or three days, simply by following your dream.

Sagittarius

Nov. 23 - Dec. 21

You will have to deal with someone today who is so slow that it drives you mad. Not everyone thinks or acts as quickly as you and sometimes you just have to wait for the slowest one in the group.

Capricorn

Dec. 22 - Jan. 20

It is not your job to please someone else — it is their job to please you. Partners and loved ones know exactly what it is you desire — all you have to do is let them give it to you.

Aquarius

Jan. 21 - Feb. 19

By all means have fun today but don't go too far and put your wellbeing at risk. Always leave a little something in reserve.

Pisces

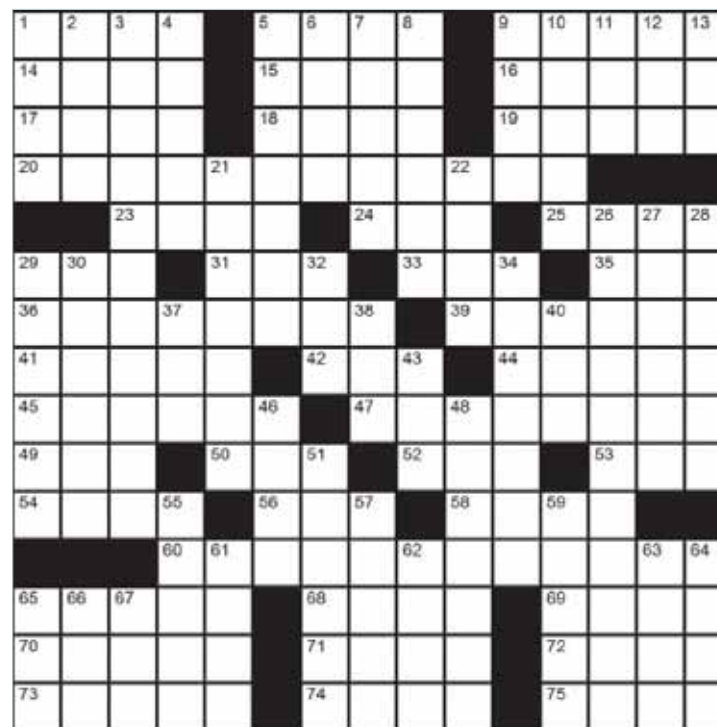
Feb. 20 - March 20

You will receive good news today but for some reason you may find it hard to believe. The planets indicate that no one is trying to deceive you.

Crossword: Canada Across and Down by Kelly Ann Buchanan

Across

1. Aware of the hoax: 2 wds.
5. ___ good cause (Reason to donate)
9. Canadian soul songstress Ms. Watson
14. Do this :(
15. "Can ___ a Witness" by Marvin Gaye
16. Bustling
17. Sacred looped cross
18. ___-drop
19. 'R' of US state RI
20. Quebec City's sculpted Wintertime retreat from January 3rd to March 22nd, 2015: 3 mots
23. ___-B toothbrush
24. 'N' of RCN [abbr.]
25. Mover's plank
29. Pronounce
31. Young sheep
33. "Uh-huh."
35. Pierre's 'here'
36. Swaps an old car towards the purchase of a new one: 2 wds.
39. Yalta's locale
41. One saying "Eww, gross.", say
42. Sever
44. Dispirit
45. 1989 Janet Jackson album: 'Rhythm ___ 1814'
47. Post to a new post
49. Wildebeest
50. ___ worth (\$\$\$)



52. Response, for short
53. Beverage menu item
54. Shaggy animals of Tibet
56. "___ Wiedersehen!"
58. CD part, variably
60. Map maker
65. Alexander __,

- Winnipeg-born hockey star
68. Triad
69. "Waking Up in ___" (2002)
70. "Why ___ you ready yet?" (Hurry up!)
71. Certain citrus
72. Antiquities
73. Funeral rite

- sights
74. Narrated
75. Additional
- Down**
1. Moonfish
2. Something naughty
3. Northwest Territories community called 'Tuk' for short
4. Questionnaire

- choice
5. Instruments featured in East Coast music
6. Fiend
7. Rule as a Royal
8. Not working but having fun instead: 2 wds.
9. Fashion designer Mr. Jacobs

10. Fireplace leftovers
11. 1990s trial Judge
12. "The Karate ___" (1984)
13. Rock's valuable band
21. Afterwards: 2 wds.
22. With, in Montreal
26. Canadian rocker born in Sarnia, ON: 2 wds.
27. "___: Dawn of the Dinosaurs" (2009)
28. Ms. Agron of "Glee"
29. Cheap
30. Secrets to some
32. Canadian actor Mr. Bellows
34. Realm of Wilhelm I
37. Agnus ___ (Mass prayer)
38. Hide Hair connector
40. Entries
43. Little legume
46. Just about
48. Mobile device operating system
51. Doubled disapproval
55. Plays: Act's one-of-some
57. Relinquish, variably
59. Unrestrained shopping
61. Sidewalk bugs
62. Fish's 'lung'
63. Finales
64. Pink
65. Maple's drink
66. Blue Rodeo hit
67. 'Mountain' suffix

Yesterday's Crossword



Online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers



Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

Yesterday's Sudoku



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